

ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

for

FISCAL YEAR 2013: JULY 2012 – JUNE 2013

I. SUMMARY

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission (“AAC”) had another active year pursuing its three-fold mission of preservation, education, and advocacy for Alexandria’s archaeological and historical resources as advanced by the City of Alexandria Strategic Plan. In particular, the AAC focused on the continuing Waterfront Plan issues including support for the formation of and participation in the Art History Implementation Committee. AAC continued to provide representation to the Freedmen’s Cemetery Memorial development and the Fort Ward Park archaeology project. In a spirit of cooperation with the other arts and history related City commissions, AAC is participating in a joint project to survey and determine ownership and historical significance of city alleys. The AAC was founded in 1975 and celebrated its 38th anniversary in February 2013.

Led by City Commission member Jake Hoogland, the AAC updated its Strategic Plan for FY2014. **In pursuit of achieving AAC’s long-range goals, the Commission continues to use as its guiding principles the City of Alexandria Strategic Plan with emphasis on Goal 7: Alexandria is a caring and inclusive community that values its rich diversity, history and culture, and promotes affordability.** The members have agreed to retain the four goals approved in FY12 involving (1) People – Alexandria Archaeology staffing, volunteers, and the history community; (2) Archaeology Museum/ Lab/ Education Center/ Storage; (3) Resource Management – funding; and (4) Archaeology, History, and Preservation. Archaeology Staff were once again invited to provide input into the formation of objectives under each main goal. The updated plan continues to look to the future of Archaeology in Alexandria.

The AAC continued its tradition of learning about different historic places and issues this year. In addition to the Alexandria Archeology Museum, the Commission met at different sites throughout the City, including the Lloyd House, Jones Point Park, the Lee-Fendall House, Beatley Central Library, and Holmes Run Park.

II. AAC ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED/PARTICIPATED IN FY2013

The Archaeological Commission pursued a variety of activities during FY2012. These activities are set forth below and are organized within headings taken from the AAC's Strategic Plan. The AAC met 12 times during the fiscal year and the Ben Brenman Award Committee met four times this fiscal year.

A. GOAL I - PEOPLE

AAC Membership: The AAC expressed its thanks to outgoing member Tom Fulton, who resigned to pursue other interests. His resignation was accepted with regret and thanks for his service and expertise. AAC welcomes new members Kevin McCandlish and Ralph Rosenbaum and looks forward to their contributions to the Commission.

Commission Outreach and Collaboration: Starting in the fall of 2012, the Chairs of AAC, The Public Records Advisory Commission, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission, Alexandria Commission for the Arts, and the Historical Preservation and Restoration Commission started meeting on a regular basis to discuss areas of common focus and collaboration between the Commissions. This led to an inaugural joint meeting of all five Commissions in January of 2013. At this joint meeting, initiatives were discussed and it was then decided that an annual joint meeting would be beneficial. It was also decided that a monthly meeting of the joint chairs would be advantageous in order to continue discussing areas of common interest; the Alley Working Group was formed as a result.

Ben Brenman Awards: The AAC selected three recipients for the 2012 Awards, which were presented by City Council on October 23, 2012. The recipients were: Mike Johnson, a longtime Fairfax County Archaeologist who has made significant contributions to the study of American Indian artifacts in Northern Virginia, as well as enthusiastically supported archaeology in Alexandria; William F. Smith, an outstanding historian who collected historic Alexandria photographs and generously lent them to Alexandria Archaeology for exhibition and publication. He was also the co-author of *A Seaport Saga*, which continues to be one of the best publications of the City's history; and the Lee-Fendall House for the archaeological work done in the museum's garden.

Acknowledgements: Retiring at the end of December 2012, after over 38 years as City Archaeologist, Pam Cressey leaves a legacy of archaeological excellence, outstanding leadership, and integrity. AAC thanks her for her support in the foundation she has laid for the future of archaeology in the City of Alexandria. AAC welcomes Fran Bromberg as acting City Archaeologist, and looks forward to working with her. On November 10, 2012, AAC hosted the annual Archaeology Volunteer Party to recognize the thousands of hours of volunteer time provided by the citizens of Alexandria.

Regrettably, Lillie Finklea was not able to attend meetings for an extended period of time due to health reasons and ultimately resigned from the Commission in November 2012. The AAC recognizes Lillie's vision and spirit displayed in the preservation of Freedmen's Cemetery and

the creation of the memorial, as well as her other contributions and dedication during five years service on the Commission.

B. GOAL II - MUSEUM, LAB, EDUCATION CENTER, STORAGE

Staff Presentations: As part of its strategic planning process, AAC invited staff members to present topics concerning the Archaeological Code and Community Archaeology throughout the year. Presentations were given by Paul Nasca, Garret Fessler, Fran Bromberg, and Ruth Reeder. Discussions revolved around the impact of Archeology on the city, the draw for visitors, growth of the program, and educational potential. Future needs of Archaeology were discussed to include staffing and improvements to the museum, office, and lab facilities. There was also a discussion of the effect of development on Archaeology and preservation within the city.

Museum Accreditation: In November of 2012, The Office of Historic Alexandria Museums was awarded accreditation as a museum system which includes the Alexandria Archaeological Museum. The accreditation was awarded by the American Alliance of Museums, and was recognized by President of the Alliance Ford Bell at a January 24th event at the Lyceum. This effort was strongly supported by the AAC over the last year.

Torpedo Factory Art Center and Archaeology Museum: Mary Jane Nugent continued as the non-voting AAC representative to the Torpedo Factory Art Center (TFAC) Board, and continues to have an excellent working relationship with her fellow Board Members as she ensures the coordination and collaboration between the Torpedo Factory and the Archaeology Museum. She remains heavily involved in all discussions coming before TFAC Board including the representation of Archaeology's interest in their strategic planning process. Among the various issues discussed was the idea of implementing an entrance fee to the Torpedo Factory. AAC is strongly opposed to this idea as it could affect visitation to the Archaeology Museum, which as it stands, is a free, donation-based public and educational resource. If this fee is ultimately implemented by the TFAC Board, AAC will insist that a percentage of proceeds be designated for Archaeology. Planned upgrades to the Museum will assist in attracting more visitors to the third floor and can be integrated with other planning efforts such as signage.

C. GOAL III - RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Budget Advocacy: AAC Chair Vincent LaPointe wrote a letter to City Council advocating for the restoration of \$75,000 in funding for the Fort Ward Archaeology Project that had been eliminated from the City Budget. Additionally, he wrote a letter requesting \$20,000 from the City Enterprise Fund to support seasonal staffing for Archaeology. In May of 2013, Vincent LaPointe and Commission member Kevin McCandlish met with City Councilman Chapman to further discuss the importance of this funding. Regrettably, this funding was not restored. Councilman Chapman has encouraged AAC to resubmit this funding request for the FY2015 budget and suggested early discussions to ensure awareness and knowledge of this initiative.

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology: The AAC held its annual joint meeting with the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) in April. This was structured as a truly joint meeting and discussions surrounded common goals, collaboration between the groups, and the possibility combining efforts for future fundraising for Alexandria Archaeology. At this meeting, AAC requested (and FOAA approved) a donation in the amount of \$1,000 to fund the marking of the graves under the Washington Street sidewalk at Freedmen's Cemetery.

D. GOAL IV - ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND PRESERVATION

Alexandria Waterfront Plan/Art History Implementation Plan: AAC continued to participate in the public debate regarding the proposed Waterfront Plan. Commission Member Jake Hoogland was endorsed by AAC as its representative on the Waterfront Commission. Ted Pulliam was appointed to represent AAC on Planning and Zoning's ad hoc Waterfront Art History Implementation Committee. Over the last several months, this Committee has developed a draft implementation plan and has prioritized their top 15 ideas for implementation.

Freedmen's Cemetery: The AAC continued to keep abreast of the issues regarding the Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial. Kathleen Pepper continued to represent AAC on the Freedmen's Cemetery and Memorial Park Design Steering Committee as well as the selection committee for the sculpture at the memorial. Based on the identification of over 86 graves found under the cemetery's Washington Street sidewalk, and in confirmation of the City's commitment to mark all identified graves, the AAC successfully worked with the City to insure that these graves would be marked. The locations of the graves will be signified by an alternate colored brick set in the sidewalk.

Fort Ward: Commission member Tom Fulton continued to represent AAC on the Fort Ward Park and Museum Advisory Group until his resignation from AAC in February of 2013. Janice Magnuson now represents AAC. AAC has continued to advocate for further funding toward the ongoing Archaeology at Fort Ward.

Park Planning: The Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities has sent out designed proposals for improvements and changes to Holmes' Run and Chinquapin Parks. AAC is concerned about the impact these changes could have to possible archaeological resources and areas of historic significance within these parks. Janice Magnuson and Mary Jane Nugent have been appointed by AAC to attend planning meetings regarding the proposals for the aforementioned parks.

The Jefferson-Houston Elementary School Construction Site: Based on significant archaeological finds at the Jefferson-Houston Elementary School construction site, AAC has followed the process of excavation and the identification of the slaughterhouse with great interest. AAC has explored ideas to interpret the site within the context of the new school building.

Oronoco Street Drain Project/West's Point Pier: The Oronoco Street Drain Project involved environmental remediation and the replacement of a large storm sewer pipe that ran between

Union Street and the Potomac River. Alexandria Archaeology staff learned of this project as part of the regular site plan review process when plans were sent for comments on the archaeological potential and the need for archaeological work. There was a distinct possibility to discover wharf and pier structures at the site of West's Point, as this landform is a feature of the cove on which Alexandria was founded, as well as the location of the earliest wharf in the City. Indeed there was evidence that the structure of a wharf remained extant under the area, and it looked as if Alexandria Archaeology would be able to collect and record significant information. Both Archeology and T&ES staff informed the construction supervisor that timbers, probably from the wharf structure, were to be set aside until we could pick them up and transport them to the Payne Street storage facility for full documentation. AAC planned to work with the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology to raise funds for Dendochronology on the wood to determine their historical significance. Due to miscommunication and a lack of coordination, however, numerous timbers with significant potential for archaeological importance were removed, while others were cut to pieces and transported to a dump. The Commission is looking at options to make sure this does not happen again. Essential considerations for the future include more inclusion in the development process and enhanced communication and coordination with contractors, developers, and project staff. For large City projects, particularly as waterfront development gets under way, AAC would like to stress the importance of including funding for, and maintaining an awareness of potential archaeology during the design phase before development work goes out to bid.

III. GOALS FOR FY2014

I. People

An opportunity exists to improve the staffing within the Alexandria Archaeology while better utilizing a dynamic volunteer group and promoting cooperative efforts within the Alexandria history community.

Objectives

1. Advocate for the improvement of staffing levels within Alexandria Archaeology.
 - a. Work with City Council to replace staff as vacancies occur.
 - b. Explore methods to:
 1. Restore staffing lost due to budget cuts.
 2. Provide for alternative funding sources through fundraising, grants or other methods (see Goal 3).
2. Make effective use of volunteers in:
 - a. Museum Staffing
 - b. Research
 - c. Field Work
3. Explore, advocate, and promote cooperative efforts with other Historic related Commissions within Alexandria

II. Museum, Lab, Education Center, Storage

Recognizing that the Office of Historic Alexandria is only one of eight municipal organizations across the country accredited for their museum systems and that the Archaeology Museum and related functions have been included in that accreditation, an opportunity exists to build upon that recognition and further enhance the professional nature and stature of the Museum and its related functions.

Objectives:

1. Catalog needs and wants of Alexandria Archaeology
2. Advocate for study of Alexandria Archeological Museum
3. Define parameters (what the study needs to do) for the study. Write RFP
4. Identify “peers” or other cities to use as role models for history museums, which could be included in/used for the study

III. Resource Management

An opportunity exists to improve funding for the Alexandria Archaeology through a variety of sources.

Objectives:

1. Identify specific needs for funding and short term vs. long term.
2. Identify alternate sources of funding
3. Coordinate with FOAA for Fundraising efforts.

IV. Archaeology, History, and Preservation

An opportunity exists to define the future of the Alexandria Archaeology and to improve preservation of historical assets and better interpret the history of Alexandria.

Objectives:

1. Explore and define the future mission and vision of the Alexandria Archaeology.
2. Support the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Historical Interpretation plan for the Alexandria Waterfront.
3. Explore opportunities for the expansion of the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, offices, and storage. (See Goal2)
4. Advocate for continued and enhanced funding and participate in the archaeology and future historical interpretation and development of Fort Ward Park.
5. Promote planning for and implementation of future interpretation and preservation of, and education through the archaeological and historical resources in the City of Alexandria.
6. Promote continued enforcement of the City of Alexandria Archaeology Code.

IV. RECRUITMENT, LEADERSHIP SELECTION, AND SUCCESSION

The Archaeological Commission recruits members by referral and the recommendation of sitting members, by advertisement on the City's website, and/or by other City organizations they will represent. In addition, the Archaeological Commission seeks an active presence throughout the City, holding its scheduled meetings at widespread locations to allow the public to learn more of its activities and opportunities. Both Commissioners and staff attend historically-related events, presentations, tours, etc., at which they may promote AAC and also service on the Commission. Nominees are encouraged to attend Commission meetings prior to formal application to City Council to help inform them of current issues, and the activities and makeup of the Commission. The AAC's brochure is distributed and appears on the OHA/Alexandria Archaeology website.

The Archaeological Commission chooses its officers by simple majority vote from among nominees proposed at the October AAC meeting: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. A slate of officers is presented for this vote by the Slate Committee in September. Any additional names may be included from the members before the October vote. Individual members may not nominate themselves. Terms are not staggered. The leadership serves a one-year term, and an unexpected vacancy is filled for the remainder of the term. Leaders may serve again at the discretion of the Commission, but must be re-nominated in competition with other nominees and chosen again by simple majority.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair acts in its stead at AAC meetings and representing AAC at other meetings. Individual Commissioners also act in a leadership capacity, heading subcommittees or representing AAC at Council, or at the meetings of other City commissions and organizations. Service on these committees helps prepare Commissioners as future officers of the AAC.

V. STRUCTURE OF THE ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council on matters relating to the City's archaeological resources and related issues within the City. Included among the AAC's responsibilities are the establishment of goals and priorities which contribute to the history and heritage of colonial, federal and historic Alexandria; propose local ordinances and state statutes to the City Council and the City Manager which promote the goals and aims embodied in Ordinance No. 3733; plan, develop and recommend short-, mid-, and long-term archaeological plans and programs for the City; encourage the integration of archaeological and historical information and site preservation into master plans and development efforts; study and make recommendations to City Council with respect to additional activities involving the City's archaeological program and artifacts; promote the use of the highest professional standards by Alexandria Archaeology staff; and enhance the visibility of the City of Alexandria as a leader in archaeology throughout Virginia, the United States, and the world.

AAC meetings are held at least 10 times per year, on the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum and, several times a year, at other sites of interest to the Commission. The fourteen (14) members of AAC include five (5) members at large, three (3) citizen members representing each of the City's three planning districts, and six (6) members representing various City organizations.

Elections are held in October of each year. The Commission officers consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Due to changes in membership and elections, person serving on the Commission may be listed in more than one representative or leadership capacity.

The following people served on the Commission during Fiscal Year 2013:

MEMBERS AT LARGE:

Ann Davin
Lillie Finklea (Resigned, December 2012); Ralph Rosenbaum (Appointed; January 2013)
Elizabeth (Indy) McCall, Vice Chair
Edward (Ted) Pulliam
Jake Hoogland

PLANNING DISTRICT MEMBERS:

Planning District I: Vincent C. LaPointe, Chair
Planning District II: Donald Kent, Jr.
Planning District III: Janice Magnuson

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES:

Alexandria Association: Tom Fulton (Resigned, February 2013); Kevin McCandlish (Appointed, March 2013)
Alexandria Historical Society: Georgia (Katy) Cannady
Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage: S. Kathleen Pepper
Chamber of Commerce: Ellen Hamilton, Secretary
Friends of Alexandria Archaeology: Mary Jane Nugent
Historic Alexandria Foundation: Seth Tinkham